



Pesticide and Food Safety Management Course
EPIQ II IQC, Environmental Management Capacity Building (EMCB)

October 21-24, 2007
Amman, Jordan

USAID, in partnership with Chemonics International and the Cadmus Group, hosted a four-day training course on pesticide and food safety management. This course brought together participants from across the Asia and Near East Region. Participants included USAID Mission Staff, USAID implementing partners, government counterparts, university faculty, and private sector clients working on activities that promote safe pesticide use and food safety management throughout the supply chain.

The objective of the course was to increase the competency and operational awareness of the integration of USAID and host country regulatory requirements related to environment, pesticides, and food safety with market-based standards and management systems throughout the project life cycle. These objectives were met through the use of the following strategies:

- Emphasis on the integration of pesticide and food safety management systems into design, procurement and implementation of projects
- Overview of USAID regulations on pesticide use and food safety management
- Overview of best practices in good agricultural practices, food safety management systems, and public and private food safety and agricultural standards and certification systems
- Field exercises designed to enhance the analytical aspects of the course through practical and real world examples
- Participant/trainer discussions highlighting the professional expertise of the trainers and participants

Through the use of the techniques discussed above and the curriculum outlined on the following pages course participants highlighted the following as the most relevant skills and knowledge acquired during the course:

- Integration of safety-sensitive planning into the project design phase
- Making the business case for getting buy-in on environmentally sensitive programs
- Primary challenges faced by USAID implementing partners regarding pesticide and food safety management systems
- Tools and techniques to apply good agricultural practices and food safety management systems to the project at all of the different phases of the project life cycle
- Environmental costs of water use, waste generation and energy consumption, and how these issues impact the program throughout the life cycle of the project

Course Overview

Participants: The 33 participants hailed from 12 countries, Afghanistan, Bangladesh, India, Indonesia, Jordan, Lebanon, Thailand, Uganda, West Bank/Gaza, Israel, Egypt, and Iraq. (See Appendix 1 for a list of participants.)

Format: The training course consisted of several forms of integrated learning processes. The trainers presented information on the basic concepts surrounding food safety and pesticide management from a regulatory compliance and market conformance perspective. Throughout the entire course the application of pesticide and food safety management throughout the project life cycle was continuously stressed. Through the group work, visual aids, question and answer sessions, and field trips to agricultural processing and production facilities participants were continuously encouraged to apply skills and knowledge learned within the context of ongoing projects from their professional work environments.

Trainers: Sessions were facilitated by Dave Gibson, Director of Environmental Services for Chemonics, Alan Schroeder, Integrated Pest Management and Pesticide Management Specialist from Cadmus, and Barney Popkin, Cognizant Technical Officer for the EPIQ II IQC Environmental Management and Capacity Building task order. The facilitators have a combined experience of over 75 years in agricultural value chain strengthening, safe pesticide use and disposal, and food safety, social, and environmental standards and certification systems.

Day 1

Introduction:

- Monica Smith, Acting Deputy Mission Director and Legal Advisor, USAID/Jordan attended the first part of the day and delivered welcoming remarks
- Course overview and course expectations

Course topics/presentations:

- Pesticide basics
- USAID's pesticide procedures
- Pesticide disposal and waste challenges
- Pesticide Evaluation Report and Safer Use Action Plan (PERSUAP) basics
- PERSUAP throughout the project life cycle
- Guest presentation: Prevalence and Impacts of Antibiotics in Jordan's Agricultural Systems

Day 2

Course topics:

- Good agriculture practices, including integrated pest management
- Agrifood occupational health and safety
- Systematizing good agricultural practices: GlobalGAP

Field exercise: Participants visited Modern Valley farm, one of the most modern agricultural exporting, producing, and packaging operations in Jordan. Participants were divided into three groups that conducted audits of the post-harvest food handling systems, pharmacology and water usage, and agronomics and pest management systems. Throughout the field exercise participants focused on the following:

- Evaluation and promotion of export competitiveness of various products.
- Applications of international standards and regulations for exporting products to the relevant markets
- Integration of value chain applications and traceability within food safety systems

Day 3

Course topics:

- Compliance and conformance with relevant standards and regulations
- Food safety basics
- Integrated management of human and animal disease vectors
- Organic production and processing systems
- Managing locusts and food security pests
- Social accountability and fair trade
- Integrated food safety systems

Day 4

Field exercise: Participants divided into two groups, visiting an olive farm and an olive oil processing facility. Each team conducted a mini-audit of the facility, designed to evaluate farm and processing vis-à-vis pesticide and food safety standards and regulations.

Participant Feedback

Workshop evaluations stated that the course design and subjects were very well organized and presented, and that the course itself was managed extremely well by its three facilitators. Participants also noted that the facilitators achieved an effective balance between practical and theoretical content.

One of the most valuable lessons of the course was how to integrate environmentally sensitive programming throughout the project life cycle from both a regulatory compliance and market conformance perspective. Such integration can be achieved by knowing when and how to apply USAID regulations, private and public standards and certifications, and other course tools such as PERSUAP.

Due to field visits and well-organized workshop sessions, the participants felt confident in their ability to analyze and diagnose problems and challenges, and then create projects designed to meet these challenges. In particular, many of the participants felt that the most important thing they learned over the course of the workshop was how to incorporate pesticide and health safety issues into the life cycle of a project, so that sensitivity to environmental and health regulations was incorporated into the project, and not added on as an afterthought. Another advantage of the

course was having the opportunity to learn from the experience of professionals from other countries represented at the workshop.

Participants were very eager to integrate lessons learned from this course into their professional lives. In general participants noted that either their colleagues or their home country in general would benefit from a more in depth discussion of the workshop topics. One participant stated that “I will take this discussion to my colleagues at work and envision what we can do to develop our country.” Another participant was struck by how useful the course information would be to his home country and suggested “...having a similar course with more time in Afghanistan. It would be very useful for Afghan mission to have such information.” According to the course evaluation, 88 percent of the participants are planning to reference the course material in their future work. Participants also expressed an interest in being able to order some of the materials in the manuals for future use.

Some suggestions for improvement included extending the course to a full week in order to expand the course topics, and finding a better balance of time between lectures and class discussions. Participants also suggested that this course be held at regular intervals, to allow participants to continue the process of developing more specialized professional expertise in these topics.